



# News Release

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## **Pesticide: keep the solution from becoming worse than the problem**

*"Safety is No Accident," as National Public Health Week theme points out*

**OLYMPIA** — As the days get warmer, expect to see more pests around your house and garden. But before you grab a can of pesticide, remember that these products can harm you, your kids, your pets and your neighbors.

"Safety is No Accident: Live Injury-Free," the theme of this year's [National Public Health Week](#) ([www.nphw.org/nphw11/first1.htm](http://www.nphw.org/nphw11/first1.htm)), is a good reminder that using pesticides wisely is essential to your family's health. It's part of an overall focus on injury prevention.

"It takes only a moment for pesticide poisoning to happen," said Secretary of Health Mary Selecky. "Instead of taking a risk, take a moment to protect yourself and your family, and to keep our communities safe."

Each spring, state Department of Health investigators follow up on numerous reports of illnesses from people who sprayed weeds or used insecticide foggers incorrectly, or who were poisoned by improperly applied herbicide granules. Pesticide poisoning can cause skin and eye irritation, asthma attacks, and permanent damage to the central nervous system.

To avoid pesticide poisoning:

- Ask yourself, "Do I really need to use this product?" Washing a few bugs off the lettuce might be better than risking your family's health.
- Protect yourself by wearing goggles and gloves when you apply pesticide. Read and follow the label. If it says, "avoid contact with eyes," protect your eyes!
- Remember that pesticides are poison. Don't leave them out where children can find them.
- Be aware of wind conditions. People get sick by inhaling pesticide that blows back.
- Look for options other than bug bombs. They can be dangerous and often don't work to control household pests. [Find alternatives](#) ([www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/Pest/fogger.htm](http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/Pest/fogger.htm)).
- Don't buy pesticides over the Internet. They could be illegal and harmful.

— More —

If you must use pesticides to control weeds and insects, consider using [Integrated Pest Management](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/upest/index.html) (www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/swfa/upest/index.html) practices. It's a way to control pests without harming people or other animals, and minimize chemical use.

Other safety precautions are important for injury prevention at home and elsewhere. A few handy hints are on the Department of Health's [Public Health Week](http://www.doh.wa.gov/phweek/2011/) web page (www.doh.wa.gov/phweek/2011/).

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Visit the Washington Department of Health website at <a href="http://www.doh.wa.gov">http://www.doh.wa.gov</a> for <i>a healthy dose of information</i> .
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